

SITUATION REPORT NO. 16

INCIDENT NO. 96-01

DATE: September 10, 1996

TIME: 8 a.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flood-Devils Lake. (Separate situation reports are issued regarding flooding in the rest of the state, incident #96-37.)
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGE: The level of Devils Lake was 1,437.59 feet MSL on September 9.

The N.D. State Water Commission anticipates the lake may freeze at 1,437.5 feet MSL to 1,438 feet MSL. Recent precipitation combined with muggy calm days and inflows into the lake continue to inhibit evaporation needed for the lake level to drop. Lakes draining into the Devils Lake Basin, including Dry and the Chain Lakes, are full and slightly above their operating levels. Drainage of these lakes into the basin may likely result in an additional rise of several inches on Devils Lake this fall. An analysis by the State Water Commission indicates the lake will be around 1,438 feet MSL by the 1997 spring melt. There is a 10 percent chance of the lake level reaching 1,440.6 feet MSL in 1997.

4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: A total of 152 claims have been filed under a waiver of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) guidelines. Of those claims, 142 are closed. The State NFIP administrator reported that 46 structures have been moved, 40 are scheduled to be moved, and eight have been demolished. NFIP has paid eight claims for dike construction. A May report indicated that the NFIP has paid \$2.8 million to insurers. Costs for claims filed after May are presently being compiled.

Under a current waiver of NFIP guidelines, insurers must have purchased flood insurance on or before March 26. The 90-day waiting period has been waived, as has a requirement that water must be touching the foundation of the building. Insured buildings below 1,438.5 feet MSL are eligible for an insurance settlement under the waiver. The waiver ends September 30.

A State Flood Coordination Center was conducted in Devils Lake on September 5. Participants agreed to expand the focus of future meetings to include preparation for next year's flood potential. Participants will also continue to report on activities regarding current conditions.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and local officials are planning public meetings in several locations to facilitate discussion of the Corps' Emergency Outlet Plan.

The USACE awarded bids for construction of the first phase of plans to increase lake level protection for the city of Devils Lake. Work will begin this fall on the inspection trench and pumping station. The first phase of the project, which includes the Creel Bay area, will not be completed until next spring. Plans for the second phase, which includes eastern sections of the lake level protection, are still under development.

After this year's harvest, the State Water Commission will look for new sites for its Available Storage Acreage Program (ASAP). The agency, which secured 13,500 feet of water storage for 1996, anticipates many of its 48 sites could be used next year.

Representatives from North Dakota's congressional delegation recently met with officials from Ramsey County Rural Utility System. The utility could lose half of its customers if the lake level reaches 1,440 feet MSL, seriously impacting funding sources for the utility.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The next State Flood Coordination Center meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m., October 3, at the Ramsey County Courthouse basement meeting room.

Signed_____

Douglas C. Friez, State Director